The opinion in support of the decision being entered today was not written for publication and is not binding precedent of the Board

Paper No. 24

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

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Ex parte JEAN-LOUIS BOUCHERON
and DANIEL SEGAUD

_____

Appeal No. 1999-2067
Application 08/911,064

_____

HEARD: APRIL 10, 2001

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Before THOMAS, LALL and BLANKENSHIP, Administrative Patent Judges.

THOMAS, Administrative Patent Judge.

DECISION ON APPEAL

Appellants have appealed to the Board from the examiner's final rejection of claims 5, 7, 8 and 27, claims 2 through 4 and 9 through 25 having been made subject to a restriction requirement.

Independent claim 27 is reproduced below:

27. An electrical lamp module for a block of signaling lights for a motor vehicle, said module comprising;

a lamp-carrier implementing a plurality of recesses used as sockets for a plurality of lamps;

a first multi-pin connector having a plurality of pins respectively connected to each of the lamp sockets via an electrical circuit for selectively and individually powering said lamps, whereby said first multi-pin connector can receive a conventional complementary bundle connector for individually powering the lamps with individual power supply voltages selectively derived from the vehicle battery in a conventional manner;

wherein said module further comprises a separate multiplex-controlled lamp powering unit including;

a second connector for separately receiving a multiplexed lamp control signal containing instructions for turning on and off the respective lamps and a common power line which is permanently connected to said vehicle battery;

an electronic printed circuit board including said second connector and further including a plurality of electronic switching means each associated with one lamp of said plurality of lamps and responsive to said instructions in said control signal for selectively connecting said common power line to said one lamp; and

means for connecting said electronic printed circuit to said first multi-pin connector;

whereby said lamps can be powered either by said conventional bundle connector or by said multiplex-controlled lamp powering unit receiving said control signal and said common power line.

The following references are relied on by the examiner:

Hayward	4,858,082	Aug. 15, 1989
Dennis	5,198,696	Mar. 30, 1993
Pidancet	5,350,305	Sep. 27, 1994 (filed Apr. 30, 1992)

Claims 5, 7, 8 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. As evidence of obviousness, the examiner relies upon Dennis in view of Hayward as to claim 27 with the addition of Pidancet as to claims 5, 7, and 8.

Rather than repeat the positions of the appellants and the examiner, reference is made to the brief and the answer for the respective details thereof.

OPINION

We reverse.

Claim 27 in part requires a first multi-pin connector to connect with conventional complementary bundles for powering the lamps. This claim also requires a second connector for connecting to the multiplexed control signal conductors and also requires a means for connecting a claimed electronic printing circuit board to the first multi-pin connector.

Figures 8 and 9 of Dennis show multiplexed signal bus 54 and power bus 56 being fed from a control module 40 to respective slave modules 41-53. Headlight clusters 60 are shown in Figure 9 to be connected to respective slave modules 41 and 42, where Figures 10 and 11 show the details of the headlight assembly. The showings in these two figures do not detail any connectors of the type required of claim 27 on appeal. Similarly, for the taillight assembly 80 in Figures 12 through 14, which are taught to connect with respective slave modules 43 and 44 of Figure 9, Figures 12 through 14 also do not detail

any showing of connectors utilized to connect respective modules to the signal bus 54 and power bus 56 of Figures 8 and 9. Even if we agree with the examiner's view at page 4 of the answer that Dennis inherently includes conductive tracks and mounting means, we do not agree with his apparent conclusion that this reference would therefore teach the claimed first multi-pin connector. The examiner admits that Dennis is silent as to the second connector. However, we find no such teachings of any type of connectors in Dennis as noted earlier.

We do not agree with the examiner's view that it would have been obvious to have modified in any way Dennis by the teachings of Hayward. The connectors of the type required of claim 27 on appeal are not taught or suggested in this reference either. At best, even if we were to agree with the examiner's view that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Dennis and Hayward, the subject matter of the two recited connectors of independent claim 27 on appeal are not taught in the combination. Therefore, we conclude the examiner has not set forth a prima facie case of obviousness of independent claim 27 on appeal. As such, we also reverse the rejection of dependent claims 5, 7 and 8 since Pidancet does not make up for the deficiencies of the combination of Dennis and Hayward.

The decision of the examiner is reversed.

REVERSED

James D. Thomas	)
Administrative Patent Judge	)
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	)
	) BOARD OF PATENT
Parshotam S. Lall	)
Administrative Patent Judge	) APPEALS AND
	)
	) INTERFERENCES
	)
Howard B. Blankenship	)
Administrative Patent Judge	)

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